



# Ten predictions for 2015

**What will be the biggest news events of 2015? Here are 10 predictions for what the next 12 months have in store.**

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What are going to be some of the biggest news events of 2015? Here are 10 predictions for this year.

But first, you might want to take a look at [my predictions for 2014](#), written one year ago.

I did very well, which can only mean one thing: I've used up all my luck, and you should treat the rather rash words written below with a large dose of scepticism.

The usual caveat applies: my predictions do not necessarily reflect my personal preferences. I am simply trying to judge/guess/estimate what the next 12 months have in store.

**1.** It's a year of important elections. The UK goes to the polls in May.

The Conservatives, who lead the current coalition, will emerge as the largest party again. But the drama won't end there. Prime Minister David Cameron will struggle to control the anti-European sentiment within his own party, as well as Scottish disillusionment with the election result. In other words, both Britain's membership of the EU and the unity of the United Kingdom will become increasingly precarious after the elections.

**2.** Europe will watch nervously as Greeks vote for a new government at the end of January. The leftwing Syriza will lead a new coalition, but its leader, Alexis Tsipras, may not find he has as much room for manoeuvre as he'd hoped as he tries to cancel austerity policies and write off Greek debt. Greece still relies on Europe and the IMF for credit, and European leaders, more confident now that a Greek exit from the euro will not spell disaster for the whole Eurozone, will negotiate hard with Tsipras.

**3.** Much will depend, of course, on Europe's most important politician, Angela Merkel. Her relationship with Russia's Vladimir Putin will be crucial in determining the fate of Ukraine. After a dramatic 2014 in

Ukraine I expect things to quiet down somewhat this year. The conflict in the east will drag on at a lower level of intensity, with neither the governments in Kiev nor Moscow wanting the war to expand. The real unknown, however, is the Ukrainian economy. If it continues to deteriorate, Kiev will come begging to the IMF and the West for further assistance.

**4.** Never underestimate the importance of incumbency in a Nigerian election. President Goodluck Jonathan's government has failed dismally to cope with the Boko Haram insurgency, but he will win another term in the closest elections since the return to civilian rule in 1999.

**5.** ISIL will continue to control a large swathe of territory in Syria and Iraq, but will be increasingly on the defensive as the year drags on. In Syria, President Assad will cling grimly onto power.

**6.** Events in the Middle East will have a large impact on the global price of oil. But at the moment the safest economic predictions for 2105 are that the recovery in the US will continue [boosting President Obama's popularity], Europe and Japan will limp along, and China will have to adjust to slower rates of growth.

**7.** In Egypt, my colleagues Peter Greste, Mohamed Fahmy and Baher Mohamed will be freed from prison. It seems inconceivable that the travesty of justice that has already seen them spend 12 months behind bars can carry on for much longer.

**8.** The Paris Summit on climate change, towards the end of 2015, could play a significant role in determining the kind of world our children and grandchildren grow up in. The UN still hopes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions so as to limit the increase in global temperature to just 2C above their pre-industrial levels. Many scientists feel a larger increase in temperatures is now inevitable. President Obama, coming towards the end of his second term, will do everything in his powers to make the Paris Summit a success.

**9.** The Rugby World Cup, held in England and Wales, will be won by the current holders, New Zealand.

**10.** The Cricket World Cup, held in Australia and New Zealand, will be won by those perennial underachievers, South Africa.

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